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EL PASO COUNTY RECEIVES OVER \$1.7 MILLION IN FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS

(EL PASO, TEXAS) This morning, United States Attorney Johnny Sutton presented a check to El Paso County for \$1,739,524.03 as reimbursement for prosecuting Federal drug cases under the Southwest Border Local Assistance Initiative. Accepting the check were El Paso County Judge Dolores Briones, District Attorney Jaime Esparza and El Paso County Sheriff's Office Chief Deputy Jimmy Apodaca.

Today's check covers costs incurred from October 1, 2000 until July 31, 2001. To date, El Paso County has received \$2,004,996.25 in reimbursement funds for prosecuting federal drug cases under the Southwest Border Local Assistance Initiative.

"I appreciate the valuable assistance of District Attorney Jaime Esparza, his office, the El Paso County Sheriff's Office, and the El Paso Police Department in the fight against crime in El Paso County," Sutton stated. "El Paso is on the front line of the battle against drug traffickers. This money represents the federal government's recognition of the vital role that state and local law enforcement plays in the effort to stop drugs from coming into our country."

Sutton also expressed appreciation to Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, "There is no question that Senator Hutchison's efforts were key to securing this funding." Sutton also thanked Senator Phil Gramm and Congressmen Silvestre Reyes, Ciro D. Rodriguez, Henry Bonilla, Charlie Gonzalez, Solomon Ortiz and Ruben Hinojosa, for their efforts in getting Congress to appropriate \$13 Million to reimburse the Southwest Border District Attorneys in Texas.

In July 2000, Congress allocated \$12 Million in federal funding to the four Southwest border states—\$3 Million each to Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. In December, Congress approved an additional \$10 Million for Texas and \$3 Million for Arizona to be used during FY 2001 only. The remaining funds available for the county and municipal governments in the Western District of Texas is estimated to be just over \$2 Million. To date, \$2,903,893 in reimbursement funds have been distributed in the Western District of Texas.

Under the Initiative, El Paso County submits to the United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas an expenditure report each quarter showing actual expenditures in the program areas approved for reimbursement. A check for those reimbursable costs will then be issued by the United States Attorney's Office. Reimbursable costs are limited to: 1) court costs; 2) detention costs; 3) courtroom technology; 4) building holding spaces; 5) administrative staff; and 6) indigent defense costs.

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